

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A process for the production of vitamin C from D-sorbitol, L-sorbose, L-sorbose or L-gulose comprising the steps of:
 - (a) cultivating a microorganism in an aqueous nutrient-medium containing 1) sorbitol, L-sorbose, L-sorbose or L-gulose, wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812), a microorganism belonging to the genus *Gluconobacter* and having identifying characteristics of *G. oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812) and mutants thereof, and
 - (b) isolating and purifying the microbial produced vitamin C directly from the fermentation medium.
2. (Original) A process for the production of vitamin C from D-sorbitol, L-sorbose, L-sorbose or L-gulose wherein a microorganism is cultivated in an aqueous nutrient medium containing D-sorbitol, L-sorbose, L-sorbose or L-gulose and the microbially produced vitamin C is isolated directly from the fermentation broth and purified by conventional methods, said microorganism being selected from the group consisting of *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812), a microorganism belonging to the genus *Gluconobacter* and having identifying characteristics of *G. oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812) and mutants thereof.
3. (Currently amended) A process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the microorganism is *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812).

4. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein vitamin C is produced from L-gulose.
5. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, wherein the process is carried out at a pH in the range of about 4.0 to about 9.0 and in a temperature range from about 13°C to about 36°C for 1 to 5 days.
6. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, wherein the process is carried out at a pH in the range of about 5.0 to about 8.0 and at a temperature range from about 18° to about 33°C for 1 to 3 days.
7. (New) A process according to claim 2 wherein the microorganism is *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812).
8. (New) The process according to claim 2 wherein vitamin C is produced from L-gulose.
9. (New) The process according to claim 2, wherein the process is carried out at a pH in the range of about 4.0 to about 9.0 and in a temperature range from about 13°C to about 36°C for 1 to 5 days.
10. (New) The process according to claim 2, wherein the process is carried out at a pH in the range of about 5.0 to about 8.0 and at a temperature range from about 18° to about 33°C for 1 to 3 days.